

Message Text

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APPROVED BY P:JJSISCO

L/NEA:KHUFFMAN

NEA:ARDAY

S/S:CABORG

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R 240022Z DEC 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 302006

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, EG, IS

SUBJECT: OIL EXPLORATION IN GULF OF SUEZ

REF: (A) CAIRO 12787 (B) TEL AVIV 7928 (C) STATE 279392

(D) CAIRO 8711

1. DEPARTMENT REMAINS CONCERNED THAT THESE INCIDENTS WITH OIL EXPLORATION SHIPS COULD MUSHROOM INTO MUCH WORSE TYPE CONFRONTATIONS. IDEALLY A NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE IS A MATTER WHICH WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR EGYPT AND ISRAEL TO RESOLVE IN DISCUSSIONS IN THE JOINT COMMISSION AS OUT-LINED IN ARTICLE VI OF THE SEPTEMBER AGREEMENT. IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH CONSULTATIONS, WE BELIEVE IT MORE APPROPRIATE TO INSTITUTE AN INFORMAL NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE AS OUT-LINED IN CAIRO 8711. AMOCO WOULD INFORM EMBASSY CAIRO OF ITS INTENTIONS CONCERNING OPERATIONS IN THE GULF OF SUEZ, EMBASSY CAIRO WOULD ADVISE EMBASSY TEL AVIV, AND EMBASSY TEL AVIV WOULD INFORM THE ISRAELIS. WE WOULD ASSURE THAT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT UNDERSTANDS THAT THIS NOTIFICATION

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PROCEDURE DOES NOT REFLECT A CHANGE IN THE U.S. LEGAL

POSITION THAT WHILE ISRAEL MAY PATROL SINAI TERRITORIAL
WATERS, TO EXTENT NECESSARY TO PROTECT ITS COASTAL OCCUPA-
TION, IT MAY NOT INTERFERE WITH EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES BY
U.S. COMPANIES IN EGYPTIAN CONCESSION AREAS. WE WOULD
FURTHER STRESS THAT WE ARE NOT ASKING ISRAELI PERMISSION

FOR AMOCO'S ACTIVITY EITHER ON OUR BEHALF OR ON BEHALF OF
EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT AND AMOCO, BUT MERELY INFORMING ISRAEL
OF THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY. OUR RATIONALE FOR PASSING THE
INFORMATION IN THIS AD HOC MANNER IS TO INSURE THE SAFETY
OF U.S. CITIZENS AND SHIPS.

2. ACTION FOR CAIRO: REQUEST EMBASSY DISCUSS THIS PRO-
CEDURE WITH AMOCO REPRESENTATIVES IN EGYPT TO ASCERTAIN IF
THEY WOULD COOPERATE IN SUCH A NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE.
UNLESS THE EMBASSY BELIEVES OTHERWISE, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD
BE APPROPRIATE ALSO TO SUGGEST JOINT COMMISSION PROCEDURE
TO THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT.

3. FOR TEL AVIV: PENDING THE ABOVE DISCUSSIONS, EMBASSY
SHOULD NOT APPROACH THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT ON THIS PRO-
POSAL. WE WILL PROVIDE A FOLLOW-UP CABLE ON THIS MATTER
AFTER WE RECEIVE AMOCO'S AND GOE'S REACTIONS.

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